

The Mayor and Council of Hurlock

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JOYCE A. SPRATT
MAYOR
JOHN H. AVERY
CLERK / TREASURER

COUNCIL MEMBERS
CHRISTOPHER J. ADAMS
CHARLES T. CEPHAS, SR.
PARKER J. DURHAM
GARY L. HENRY
MICHAEL D. NORDSTROM

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES January 28, 2013

6:00 P.M. Meeting was called to order by Mayor Spratt. Following the pledge of allegiance Mayor Spratt gave the opening prayer.

Roll call was taken, in attendance were Councilmembers Adams, Cephas, Durham, Henry and Nordstrom, and also in attendance were Mayor Spratt and Clerk Avery.

Approval of the minutes of open session of January 7, 2013 and closed session minutes of January 2, 2013 was called for. Councilman Nordstrom made a motion to approve the minutes with a second by Councilman Durham. The motion was put to a vote and passed 5 in favor and none opposed.

Approval of the minutes of the January 14th open session was called for; Councilman Nordstrom made a motion to approve the minutes with a second by Councilman Henry. The minutes were approved 4 in favor with Councilman Durham abstaining due to having been absent, 4 to 0. A motion was made to approve the Agenda by Councilman Nordstrom and seconded by Councilman Durham and passed 5 in favor with none opposed, 5 to 0.

Mayors Report;

Mayor Spratt described the Federalsburg Lions Club request to use the Town train cars for a Federalsburg event and opened the idea up for discussion with the Council. Councilman Durham made a motion to approve Federalsburg use of the train cars as long as they covered all expenses. Following a second from Councilman Adams the motion was passed all in favor with none opposed, 5 to 0.

County Councilman Rick Price's report;

The County Public Works Director, Tom Moore, and Mr. Price met with John Avery to discuss the condition of the portion of Jackson Street that is in the County. Mr. Moore said that he would look into repairing the poles and tar and chip the end portion of the road. Mr. Price announced the County would hold their first budget work session January 31st at 4:30 P.M.

Mayor Spratt described the fact that the Open Meeting Act does not give the public the right to speak during meetings unless they are on the agenda. Councilman Cephas stated that Council has the right to let people speak and confirmed with Mr. Price that people can be allowed to speak during County Council meetings. Councilman Adams stated that he did not want to take right away from the public to speak at meetings.

Department Reports;

Chief Les Hutton stated that the Maryland State Police NCIC audit was done the prior week and the department passed with flying colors. The Chief congratulated his assistant Dawn Betton and commented that she is a valuable asset to the department.

Old Business;

Councilman Adams said he is in favor of the idea for a new police station but does not want to put the burden of the cost on the Town. He also said he wants to give the people in town the ability to speak their opinion. Councilman Henry stated that a new station is a good and necessary idea. The old building is not up to code, the Town needs to show that we are correcting the deficiencies of the old building. He also stated the Town is in good financial shape and cannot afford to be without a police department. Councilman Nordstrom questioned the number of code violations of the existing building and stated if something is not done that the Town could be without a police department. He added that it is his responsibility to protect the people of the Town.

Councilman Cephas said the Council has not had the opportunity to meet with the auditor's one on one and this could be detrimental to the Town. He went on to say that if we depend on two major businesses to support a new building that the Town could be going down a dangerous path. The people should have a right to hear the information and voice their opinion. He added the nothing has been done to show the Town can afford the loan. Councilman Cephas said he would like to see a reserve fund with enough money to support the Town for 1 to 2 years. He would also like to see USDA's input and not make a decision based on impulse. He also said he is not in favor of the project being put to a vote and questioned if revenue is enough to sustain a loan. He said he would not support the idea in good consciousness. Mayor Spratt said that the Town would be taking only the next step to go forward with USDA and the project could be stopped along the way. Councilman Cephas stated that the Council should be at the table with USDA and every step forward from this point has a cost factor.

Councilman Durham said the Town is obligated to provide services to the citizens including security. Look at the wastewater treatment plant, now that you look back at that project you see that it was good. He said the police station would be the same way. He said he is very much in favor of the project.

Councilman Durham made a motion to go forward with the project, Councilman Nordstrom seconded the motion.

Under discussion Councilman Cephas said it is foolhardy to go forward. He said you can't compare the proposed police station to the wastewater treatment plant. He said that the residents will suffer. Councilman Adams said he does not see the urgency in this matter. He asked why we (the Council) are trying to push the idea through. He stated that he has just seen this project. Chief Hutton said that the idea of this project was started in early 2011.

vote was called for on the motion; Councilmen Durham, Henry and Nordstrom voted in favor with Councilmen Cephas and Adams voting opposed. The motion passed 3 ayes and 2 nays.

Councilman Cephas said he wants to do due diligence, he said an analytical study should be done. Councilman Cephas made a motion to stop the project and was seconded by Councilman Adams.

Councilman Durham said he would rather come back next month than stop it now. He stated that he has spoken to some people that are in favor of the project. He added that he feels strongly that the project should go forward. Councilman Cephas asked Durham if he has looked at alternatives and stated that all alternatives should be explored. Councilman Cephas said the Council should do its due diligence and do a study. He further added that it is his opinion that the Council is rushing into this project.

Councilman Cephas motion was put to a vote with Councilmen Cephas and Adams in favor and Henry, Nordstrom and Durham opposed. The motion failed with 2 aye votes and 3 nay votes.

New Business;

Discussion regarding lock boxes was tabled due to Chief Steve Mills not being present.

Mr. Russ Phillips made a presentation to the Mayor and Council describing the Legal Shield program. He described his program as being a legal service that employees and the Mayor and Council can enroll in. The fee is very modest and can be paid for through payroll deductions. The service can be kept after a person leaves the employment of the Town. Mr. Phillips added that this service is offered at no charge to the Town itself. Following that Councilman Cephas made a motion to allow Legal Shield to be presented to Town employees, Councilman Nordstrom seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote with 4 voting in favor and Councilman Adams abstaining as he already has the service. The motion passed 4 to 0.

Discussion for the parade permit approval for Ministers and Citizens was tabled.

The Mayor said she wanted to recognize and say a prayer for the family of Lee Davis. His nephew was shot and killed in Baltimore. He was a former resident of Hurlock and only 32 years old.

Councilman Cephas made a brief statement that it is time to take a serious look at the direction that youth are going today.

With business concluded Councilman Nordstrom made a motion to adjourn the open session and go to a closed session for the discussion of personnel and real estate matters. Following a second by Councilman Adams a vote was taken and passed 5 in favor and none opposed.

Announcement was made that the Council would not be returning to an open session following the closed session.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectively Submitted;


John Avery
Clerk/Treasurer


Mayor:

Passed:



Councilmembers:





